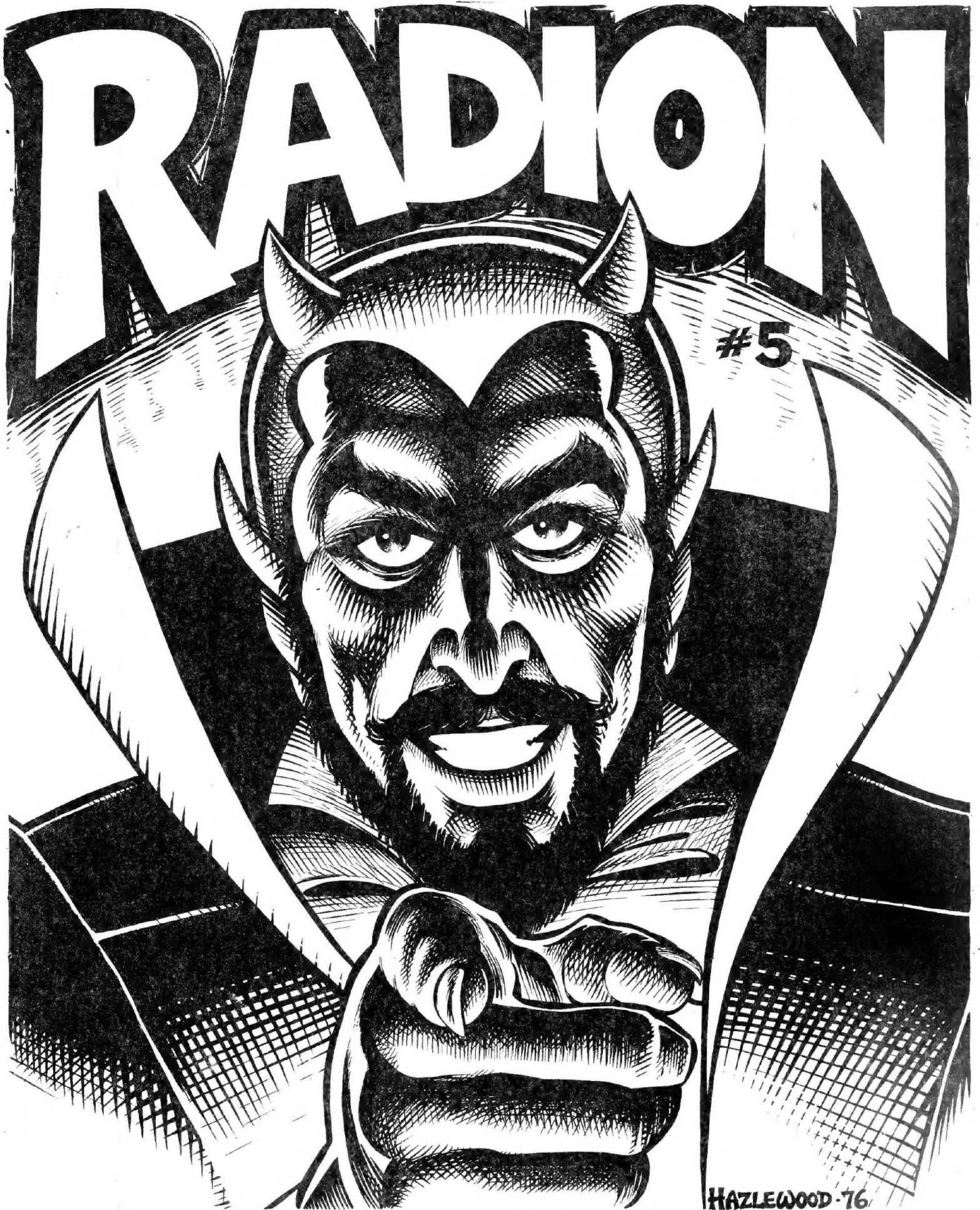




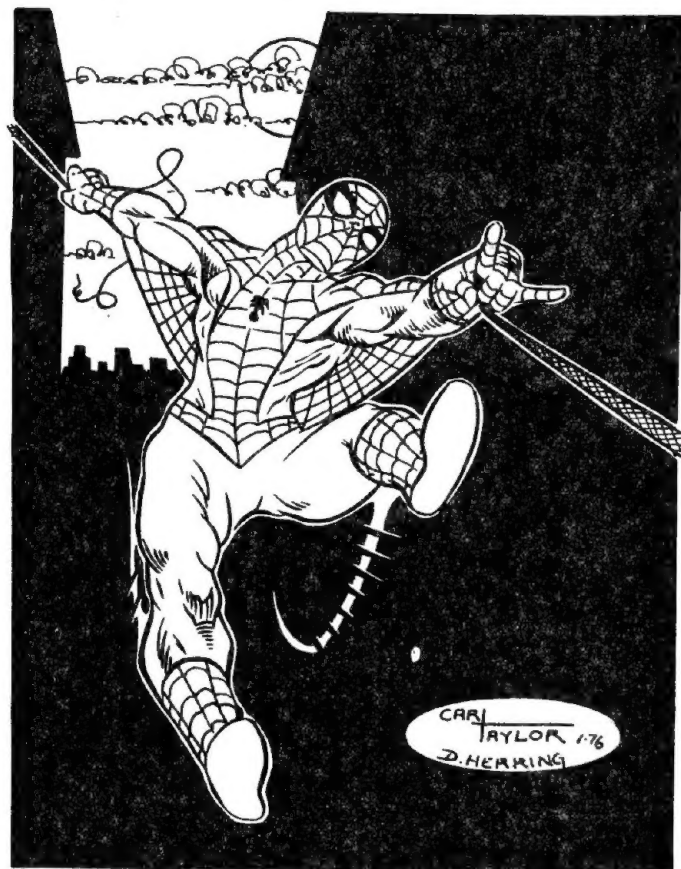


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RADION 5--published now and then--This issue: 75¢ per copy. No subscriptions or advance orders accepted. For issue 4, see the UFO Checklist. Contributions welcome with open arms. This issue completed at 11:45 pm January 2, 1976. Address all mail to Tom Mason--705 Draper Road--Blacksburg, Virginia--24060



As the illustration on the left says, I have returned. (The illustration on the left was originally done for a restaurant called the "Place" but never used). Despite popular belief, I have not absconded with everybody's quarters and sold the artwork to a Cuban comics publisher. For trivia freaks, it's been a year since Radion 4--the "big change" issue. With any luck, Radion 6 won't be as far off. I'd like to publish about 3 times a year (dream on, dream on) and with more luck (read money) this fantasy could become reality.

The major text in this issue is the biography of one of the better storytellers in the business--Jim Shooter--by Rich Morrissey. This is the third in Rich's "Bio-Article" series. The first two on Elliot S! Maggin and Cary Bates appeared in Chris Lomelino's fanzine GRAPHIC VISIONS #3 and 4, respectively. But, unfortunately, Chris has Gotton-Away-From-It-All (gafiated--left fandom) so the article appears here. Simple? I thought not.

Gino Membrino's article on Dan Curtis, Dark Shadows, and so forth came out to be twenty pages long and there was no way it could fit in this issue. It has been put on hold and should appear next issue. Gino is currently the top man at I-SAPA (the Inter-State Amateur Press Alliance) which is dedicated to book-burning, pepperoni pizza (with no mushrooms), and grape jelly. Plans for the current fiscal year include the assassination of Howard the Duck.

The other text feature is the quick interview with Byron Preiss. I was impressed by the work he had done for his publications Weird Heroes and Fiction Illustrated and wanted to find out some more about him than was offered in the "About the Author" section in his books.

As for art, Doug Hazlewood's name is the first to come to mind and rightly so. Doug lent that magic brush of his to a dozen illustrations, including the cover. Doug Hazlewood is sure to walk away with the Best Inker award from the UFO this year. Doug is currently appearing as a central tunnel support on the new Victoria line along with Mr. N.P. Gumby.

Paul Chadwick appears here courtesy of Paul Chadwick. Paul's work has appeared in many fine zines--most notably Kurt Erichsen's ENDEAVOR and Mike Main's FREE FALL. Paul is a fine draftsman whose work is always a pleasure to see.

Sam de la Rosa and Ric Cruz are not new names to fandom. Their work (both individually and as a team) has appeared in a number of zines including THE NOSTALGIA JOURNAL and FANTASY CROSSROADS. Sam does a lot of background work for Pat Boyette. And Ric is a friend of Sam's. Tim Herzog and Bill Mutschler are

relatively (no they are not related) new names to fandom. Bill publishes two zines (ENTROPY COSMIX and GRAPHEX) and inks Tim's pencils and Tim pencils for Bill to ink. Carl Taylor is an old name whose work has appeared literally everywhere. Currently living in California (Where The Wild Things Are) he is chained to his drawing board working on a new fanzine. Lee Jackson's name may not be familiar to some, but he's no newcomer. He's been drawing fan comic strips for quite some time, but just hasn't gotten the exposure he deserves. He is currently appearing in Eric Larsen's IN THE SHADOW OF THE MONOLITH (45¢ to box 16369, NCSU, Raleigh, NC 27607). Wes Smith appears again. This time to ink Carl Taylor. Gene Day is up north (Canada) where he draws for and edits DARK FANTASY. Doug Herring (no, not the illusionist) sends a package from California now and then and then mysteriously vanishes. Pat Boyette, Arv Jones, Gil Kane, Wally Wood, and Al Williamson need no introduction, and hence they shall get none.

Next issue (GAK!), unless something happens--like contributions, will be 30 blank pages. The vault (actually a manilla envelope with a paper clip) is empty and once again I have to get on my hands and knees to solicit contributions. I hate to grovel. So spare me public embarrassment and wear and tear on my pants and keep those contributions coming. They are welcomed with open arms. Writers receive the proverbial free issue and artists receive not only the free issue, but they get their original work returned.

Lest I forget, the UFO Checklist is in here. It is, to my knowledge, the longest one in the history of the co-op, and features many fine zines, especially Jay Zilber's FANDOM FUNNIES with the Buyer's Guide parody. Be sure to mention the checklist when ordering any fanzine from it. Any fan editor interested in joining the group should contact Kurt Erichsen, the current chairman, for details and include 40¢ for a copy of the latest newsletter--Tetragrammaton Fragments. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to be back in my coffin by sunrise.



A FEW LAST MINUTE PLUGS:

GNOME 1: Latest fanzine from the house of Jim

Main features art by Doug Hazlewood (that boy does get around), Wes Smith, Bill Black, Roland Austin, and Mike Tuz. "Last Journey of the Cyrus" by Rod Snyder, Steve Mitchell, and Erichsen, Fanzine reviews by Don Fortier, "SF to Police" by Tony Scialis. 25¢ to 85A Prospect Hill Rd. New Milford, Conn 06776

BLACK LIGHT: The second issue of this text and art zine is 36 pages. Fan fiction, book reviews, movie reviews, and a strip by the editor and Gene Day round out the issue. Other work by Gordon Linzner, Charles Saunders, Charles Smith, Gary Kato, and more. \$1.00 to John DiPrete, P.O. Box 8214, Cranston, RI 02920

YIKES 2: Strange humorzine from George Erling. His underground cartoons have appeared in both TEG and COMIX UNLIMITED. And it is strange. Five strips including "Cap'n Boom", "Hot Dog", and "Snakcracker"--the crabbiest guy in the world. Only 5¢ and a first class stamp from Stray Kat Studios, 357 Newark Pompton Turnpike, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444. Strange, indeed.

Radion: Doesn't the original art lose a lot of detail when reduced that small?

Byron: With the developement of high-quality artwork for the series and Pyramid's realization that what we are producing merits more than the difficult-to-get-good-reproduction-on-newsprint, we are including a third version of each book for publication. Starting with Fiction Illustrated Volume 3--Steranko's Chandler--we will be simultaneously releasing a deluxe 8½x11, 60-pound vellum-finish stock edition of the material. With a finer 120 dot line color screen, this will be one of the nicest "packages" for new comics in the history of the medium in America--a source of pride and, finally, a production within the same realm of quality as the French and Spanish hardcover comics. Ours will be a "trade paperback", a hefty 128 pages for \$4.95.

Radion: How have Weird Heroes and Fiction Illustrated been accepted by the public?

Byron: Public reaction to both series has been heartening. We received many letters on Weird Heroes 1 and Starfawn (FI #2). There will be a sequel to Starfawn sometime in 1977 by the team of Fabian/Preiss/Arthur Cover--a talented recent SF writer.

Radion: Why was Kenneth Smith chosen to letter Schlomo Raven?

Byron: Ken Smith was hired to both color and letter Schlomo, but the coloring hit time snags and Marie Sererin was called in to do a finishing job. As for the motive for the lettering--a "period feel" was wanted for the entire book including the lettering. Since issue two, however, we have been using type for captions. It has a clear, easily readable look and, when doing the large editions, "blows up" legibly.

Radion: I've noticed your name attached to several strips in the National Lampoon. What's the story on that?



Byron: In 1975-76, we initiated 3 new strips in the Lampoon. These were packaged entirely by us. THRILLING, originally illustrated by Berni Wrightson and later by Terry Austin, may be appearing in Mike Friedrich's STAR-REACH. HARD BOILED DICK and HIGH SCHOOL DAYS--two artists, Weiss then Giordano--have been cancelled. NatLamp is revamping their comics section somewhat--adding more color.

Radion: How did ONE YEAR AFFAIR find its way into NatLamp? How far ahead is it done?

Byron: ONE YEAR AFFAIR was originally done for a Philadelphia-based Village Voice-type newspaper called The Drummer. The publisher liked it, but the editor didn't want to run it. Lampoon bought it quickly, thanks to Mike Gross. The climax appeared in the September 1976 issue, exactly three years after it first appeared. How far ahead is the strip done? About three hours before deadline.

Radion: Do you have any advice for aspiring young writers?

- Byron:
- 1) Be sure of your legal rights--insist on copyright or participatory financial interest in whatever is sold.
 - 2) Don't waste time working for markets you don't respect.
 - 3) Don't be discouraged by rejection slips.
 - 4) When submitting work to publishers, it is best to submit to a name--"Mr. Rocaboo," rather than an office--"The Editor." For magazine names, check the masthead. For book editors, check the Literary Market Place or Writer's Market, available in libraries or bookstores. Send an SASE, and typed manuscripts that have been proofread for grammar and spelling errors.
 - 5) Don't be afraid to make submissions.





SCRIPTO

BOY WONDER

by Rich Morrissey

Among the various subgroups of fandom, probably the one that is most astonishing to those who do not belong to it is that devoted to the Legion of Super-Heroes. It is unusual enough for a National feature to be especially-acclaimed in fandom--and for one that arose from the

oft-derided "Superman Family" of the 1960s, and has been handled throughout its run by two such little-acclaimed editors as Mort Weisinger and Murray Boltinoff, its popularity in fandom is nothing short of incredible! There have been at least four different fanzines and an amateur press association devoted to the Legion, and a special issue of Amazing World of DC Comics dealing with the group sold out so quickly that a regular column on the Legion has been established there.

But strangely enough, the Legion almost certainly would not have been so successful in fandom--and, most likely, even among the general comic readership--had it not been for two 13-year-old boys who wrote to National six years apart. In both cases, the editor's decision to print their contributions had far-reaching consequences.

* * *

It's true that the Legion had done very well for itself by 1965, before James Shooter of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania ever had any contact with Superman editor Mort Weisinger. Origination in a 1958 Superboy story by Otto Binder--in which this society of the greatest teenage super-heroes of the 21st century (later changed to the 30th century) decided to induct the legendary figure of the 20th--they continued to pop up in future Superboy stories--and, whatever the time paradoxes involved, in Superman and Supergirl tales as well. For a time it seemed as if they spent more of their time wrapping up villains of the 20th century, Weisinger's dictum that it was impossible to change the past notwithstanding, than they did in their own time, but this was remedied when they were given their own feature in Adventure Comics, backing up the long-running Superboy strip in which they had originated. But the group became so popular that it pushed Superboy into the back of the book before long, making up for the fewer pages his solo strip had by giving him a larger role in the Legion stories. By 1965, an increased editorial workload had resulted in the replacement of the new Superboy solos with reprints from his own title, and the Legionnaires were the unquestioned stars of Adventure.

To Jim Shooter, however, the Legion strip--as it was then being handled by writer Edmond Hamilton and artist John Forte--left much to be desired. Although acknowledged among science fiction fans as the master of space opera, Hamilton found it very difficult to work under the tight deadlines on the Legion--and the scripts, although occasionally memorable, generally showed this fact. Mort Weisinger believed in a style concentrating on gimmicky plots and sublimating action and characterization--and Hamilton, who went along with Weisinger's thinking at least as far as this strip was concerned, often ignored characterizations and had the Legionnaires all act alike except for their powers. There were a few traces of individual characterization, especially in Superboy, Saturn Girl, Brainiac 5, and Shrinking Violet, but they were few and far between. Action was often all but nonexistent; for the most part the Legionnaires merely pointed their fingers to use their powers--and did nothing else. (In one early story a single villain with no evidence of any powers other than the ability to fly managed to hullyf the Legionnaires' powers--and, despite the fact that they still had him outnumbered 12 to 1, they did nothing but fly away (with their own anti-gravity belts) themselves!)

Small wonder the Legion compared rather unfavorably with the other super-hero groups then in existence--National's Justice League, and (even more in Jim Shooter's eyes) Marvel's Fantastic Four and Avengers. Jim was fascinated by the Marvel comics that were just beginning to establish themselves at this time--Stan Lee's fresh style, concentrating on hitherto-neglected types of storytelling such as characterization, strong issue-to-issue continuity, and explosive action that Marvel's head artist, Jack Kirby, masterfully portrayed, had drawn an enthusiastic response; especially among the older readers who were beginning to tire of the National-influenced style that had dominated comic books for decades.

One day, as Jim Shooter was leafing through one of Hamilton's Legion stories ("The War Between Krypton and Earth," in Adventure #333), he thought once again of how a good story line and cover scene (a prehistoric war between the two worlds, with some of the Legionnaires on each side) had once



again been turned into an unlikely, slow-paced story with very little real action to speak of. "I could do better than this!" he thought, and it suddenly occurred to him that people were paid for writing comic books--and he and his widowed mother did have difficulty making ends meet. He promptly drew a comic book of his own, complete with cover, that featured the Legion in active combat with a Marvel-esque villain, Dr. Zaxton Regulus. Dr. Regulus, Shooter revealed, had been the man who had locked Sun Boy in the nuclear reactor that gave him his powers--and was now capturing the Legionnaires one by one "like the Ten Little Indians." (The same idea had been used by Agatha Christie in her classic novel *Ten Little Niggers*, which in the American edition had, for obvious reasons, used the same title as Shooter's script--*And Then There Were None!* But Jim Shooter had never read any of Mrs. Christie's works...)

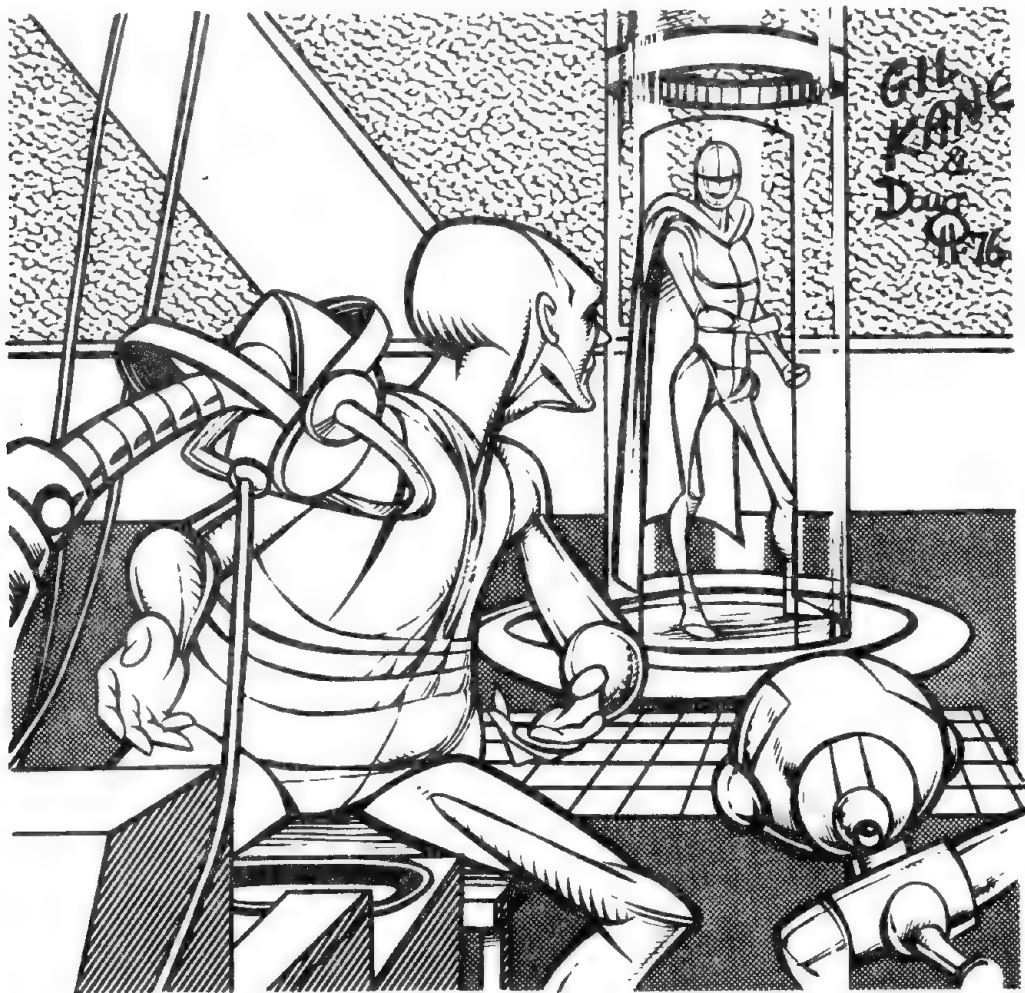
After drawing up this 24-page story, Shooter had second thoughts about sending it in--and only his mother's insistence persuaded him to send it in. But, although he didn't know it, Mort Weisinger badly needed a Legion writer. Edmond Hamilton was leaving for other fields of endeavor and a replacement was needed. The Adventure editor was very impressed by "And Then There Were None," and much to Shooter's surprise, wrote back and asked him for another script!

Shooter eagerly obliged with a two-parter, "One of Us is a Traitor," in which he attacked one of his pet peeves with the Legion-strip by introducing three new members, Karate Kid, Ferro Lad, and Nemesis Kid, who relied heavily of physical action. (A fourth newcomer, Princess Projectra, had a quieter power--but this, after all, was in the days when heroines usually didn't get quite as much action as their male cohorts.) But one of the new members was a spy--and, after a skillful bit of misdirection, he was revealed as Nemesis Kid just in time to deal a crushing defeat to the alien invaders who were attacking Earth. Mort Weisinger was convinced--he bought both the two-parter (which was illustrated by Sheldon Moldoff and Curt Swan for Adventure 346 and 347) and the Dr. Regulus piece Shooter had originally submitted (which George Papp drew up for #348). Still not quite sure how old his new writer was, Weisinger urged him to submit more stories, not only for the Legion (which, thanks to the accident of the first script coming out to 24 pages, was now a booklength feature) but for the other Superman titles. Shooter was only too happy to do so.



However Princess Projectra might have reinforced the "hapless heroine" syndrome, Shooter totally negated it with his first Supergirl story, "Brainiac's Blitz" (which appeared in Action #339, and tied the first part of "One of Us is a Traitor" for Jim's first published story. It was also his first to be reprinted, in Superman Family #164). Shooter had long felt that Supergirl was too powerful to be involved in so many trivial adventures--and decided to do a 12-page fight between her and Superman's most powerful foe as a change of pace. Weisinger didn't care for it very much, but he bought it--and the reaction was overwhelmingly favorable among the readers.

They reacted even more favorably to Shooter's version of Superman, which added amounts of action and characterization that had been unmatched in his stories for years. "The Power of the Parasite" in Action #340 utilized what was practically a standard Weisinger plot (though once again Shooter had independently reinvented it)--a villain who can absorb energy attacks Superman, ends up with too much power, and then explodes. But Shooter did it so well--with real plot development, characterization of the hero and villain that complemented their grueling battle well, and a general sense of excitement--that the story was an overwhelming success, and led to Jim's resurrection of the Parasite several years later in a different and even better plot situation. (And, in recent years, three other writers have picked him up--and he looks fair to become a permanent member of Superman's rogues' gallery.)



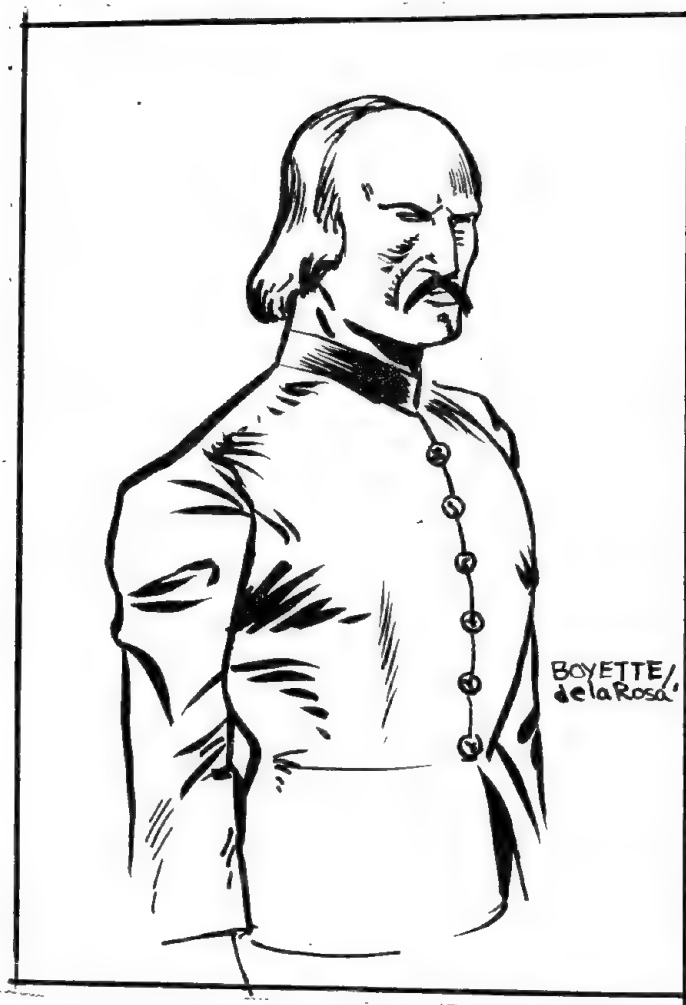
Although, admittedly, many of Shooter's Superman stories were little more than extended battles, he possessed the rare ability to make the battles themselves provide a satisfying plot--certainly Mort Weisinger, whose most important demand was plotting, would have settled for no less. Often the relationships between Superman's adversaries and those who had unleashed them, as in the stories where he battled such excellent Shooter creations as Amalak, Crax, and Eterno together with the older villains like Brainiac and the Superman Revenge Squad, provided a good part of the interest. In short, Jim Shooter combined the best aspects of the Stan Lee writing style (which nobody else except, at times, Roy Thomas and Len Wein has ever really approached) with the tight plotting and non-continued (for the most part) stories Mort Weisinger demanded.

And the total effect was something that has never been seen before or since in comics. In some ways, it may have approached real life, within the boundaries of the traditional super-hero mythos, more closely than any other comics of the time--characterization and continuity were present, but not driven to the point of soap opera like most of the Marvel titles tended to.

And nowhere was this more evident than with the Legion of Super-Heroes: Jim Shooter's first and most enduring assignment. Unlike the Superman strip, in which Weisinger insisted on few if any permanent changes, the Legion had had some continuing subplots, important developments and changes of membership even in Edmond Hamilton's day--characteristics that had influenced Shooter's view that here was a strip whose limitations were flexible enough to enable him to do something with. And do something he did. No sooner had he become firmly ensconced as the permanent Legion writer than he came up with another two-parter, his best yet and probably one of the best he ever wrote--"The Fatal Five" (Adventure #352 and #353). This story presented a truly mind-wrenching adversary--an immense creature that fed on suns

and was headed for our galaxy at a time when only five Legionnaires were present. It was quite a change from the minor-league space pirates that had dominated the Hamilton era!

The Legionnaires quickly realized they had no chance fighting the creature alone, and sought the aid of the older, wiser super-heroes of the galaxy--but all of them considered it so hopeless that they preferred to devote their abilities to helping as many people as possible to escape the galaxy. In desperation the Legionnaires decided to approach five powerful criminals, who would also be endangered by the Sun-Eater, to help them. And so the stage was set for the Legion's greatest battle for survival.



The five villains were all original Shooter creations, and brilliantly developed and characterized. It was one of them, the half-mechanical (long before the Six Million Dollar Man) and brilliant Tharok, who took command of the shaky alliance of heroes and villains, and temporarily increased their powers enough to give them a fighting chance against the Sun-Eater. After several clashes between members of the motley band--and a delightful seduction scene between the villainous Emerald Empress and Superboy that flirted dangerously with the Comics Code--the battle began, and it looked as if not everyone would get out of it alive. But Mort Weisinger was unwilling to allow one of the "established" Legionnaires to be killed off, so Shooter reluctantly sacrificed his own recent creation, Ferro Lan, as the final casualty of battle. But the Sun-Eater was destroyed, Earth and the galaxy were safe--and it was then that the newly-created Fatal Five struck.

Tharok had easily convinced the other three villains that they could accomplish much more together than separately--and the fifth, the nonmalicious but stupid and destructive monster Validus, had easily been brought under Tharok's mental control. The Five were so much more powerful than the four remaining Legionnaires that it looked like the end for them--but at the last moment, Validus broke free of his control and attacked the others. They all vanished in a vast explosion, leaving their ultimate fate in question.

Not so Ferro Lad's. Jim Shooter wanted this death to be permanent and Weisinger, once the agreement had been reached, backed him up. Soon after, an Adult Legion story established that he had never returned from the "dead," as Lightning Lad and so many other characters had earlier--and

"The Ghost of Ferro Lad" in Adventure #357, established it even more firmly in a completely unexpected, but highly acclaimed, way. As always with a "dead" character, endless letters came in begging for his revival, but he never did return, which is something that can be said for very few comic book characters.

The powerful villains came thick and fast throughout 1967: the Renegade Controller, a mighty being who had set the Sun-Eater out to prove his power and was not at all pleased at its destruction; Otto Orion, who hunted heroes in an editorially-suggested "Most Dangerous Game" type of story; and Kandro Boltax, a corrupt politician





who was more than he seemed to be when he had the Legion declared illegal in another two-parter. This last story had the unusual feature of presenting the Legionnaires out of uniform, as well as on the other side of the law for once. Very subtle characterization was also developing, as Karate Kid and Princess Projectra gradually fell in love rather than falling into each other's arms at first sight. Shooter continued Hamilton's characterizations, and expanded on them; the Legion at last was meeting the potential he had seen in it two years before.

Most devotees of the feature consider the early 360's of Adventure to represent one of Shooter's low periods. Probably the art had something to do with it; Curt Swan had been temporarily replaced by Jim Mooney and Pete Costanza, who, although good in their own way as Omega the Unknown and the original Captain Marvel have respectively indicated, just weren't the right artists for the Legion. Shooter was still doing his scripts as rough sketches of comic book pages, rather than typed descriptions, which allowed for more contribution to the finished layout. (This is a very rare method of doing a script--though some Dell/Gold Key artist/writers like John Stanley and Carl Barks had long been using it when writing stories they did not draw). But Mooney and Costanza interpreted these particular layouts rather crudely or over-cartoonishly.

But, as Shooter himself admits, the stories of this period weren't his best, either. "Black Day for the Legion" pitted the group against a literally mad scientist, Dr. Mantis Morlo (who Pete Costanza drew, as a

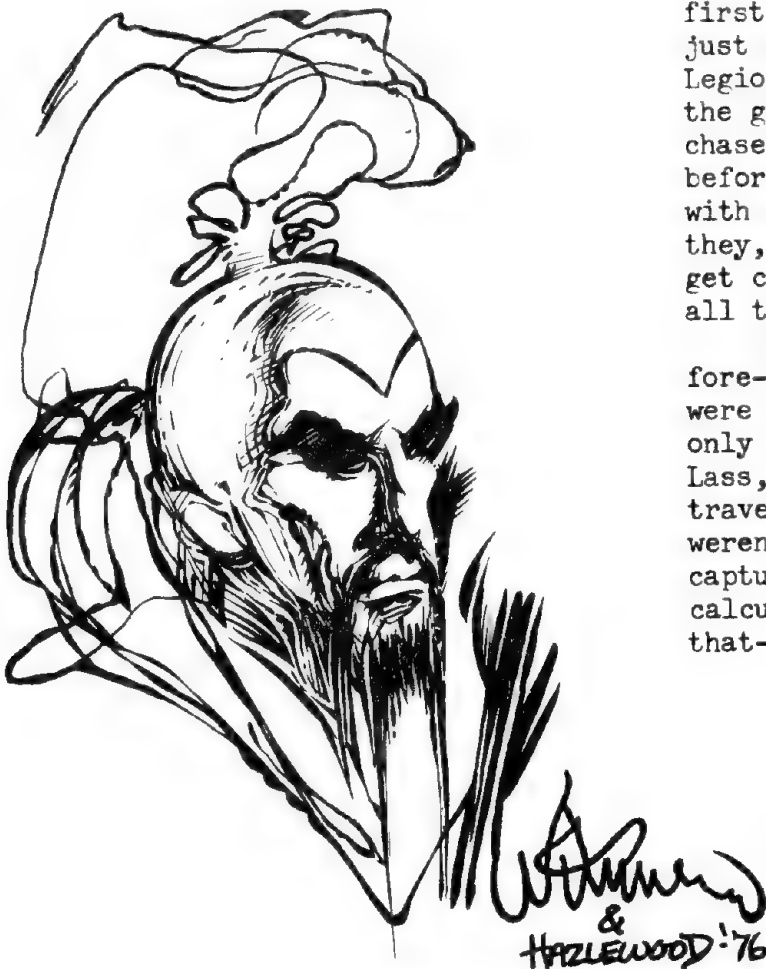
private joke, to resemble Captain Marvel's arch-foe, mad Dr. Thaddeus Sivana), whose idea of revenge for an imagined slight was to lure the Legionnaires to other planets and then destroy Earth. Mort Weisinger didn't particularly like Shooter's original script, which contained elements of which he disapproved (such as Princess Projectra's father disliking the idea of having his daughter involved with a commoner like Karate Kid) and demanded that four pages be re-written--the only time he ever rejected a completed script. The story ended up with a good deal of frivolous power demonstration in place of the original "too strong" characterization. Even so, this two-parter didn't come off too badly in this writer's eyes; it furnished, even in its censored form, some interesting insight into life on the Legionnaires' home planets and further developments in the Karate Kid-Princess Projectra relationship.

"The Revolt of the Super-Pets" which followed this story, was Shooter's own least favorite--an opinion echoed by many others, and this time not too far from my own. Mort Weisinger had demanded a story involving the Legion of Super-Pets, an organization for which neither Shooter nor many of his older readers had much affection, and the story showed it. It was probably as good as any involving the group, though.

But if the first half of the "decade" was unimpressive, the second half more than made up for it. "The Battle for the Championship of the Universe" was exactly that--the Fatal Five, now united permanently as Tharok strengthened his control of Validus, escaped from the dimension into which the explosion had

thrown them with the Legionnaires' unwitting aid. Shooter spent the first issue and half of the second just setting the stage, as the Legionnaires escaped all the obstacles the group had placed in its path and chased them across the galaxy and back before the battle they had feared--with adversaries far powerful than they, who had only to destroy them to get control of a computer controlling all the weapons of the universe.

In a way, it was the same as before--once again only four Legionnaires were available to face the Five, and only the last-minute admission of Shadow Lass, a guide they'd picked up on their travels, turned the tide. The Five weren't defeated by the Legion, or captured--as Tharok's brain had correctly calculated, they were too powerful for that--but the Legion, using the courage and idealism that made them worthy of their name, achieved as great a victory as was possible by holding them off long enough for the United Planets armed forces to come to their aid and drive off the Five. But the battle once again had had a casualty--this time the rocket clubhouse the



Legion occupied. Nobody missed it very much--it wasn't very appropriate for the group, anyway. (The Substitute Heroes later rescued it from a junkyard and fixed it up).

The following issue (#367) was a single change of pace, "No Escape From the Circle of Death"--but very well done, full of action even so, and Jim's own favorite. While building their new (and current) headquarters, the Legionnaires were attacked by aliens who found the lull after the Fatal Five clash the best time to take Earth for their "Dark Circle"--only to be defeated by a Miracle Machine that was a housewarming gift from the Controllers, in appreciation for the Legion's defeat of their renegade member in #357. After this, the machine was, after some debate, sealed in a cube of inetrtron--and, although it has come to their rescue twice, the Legion used it only when no other alternative was available from that point on. (Shooter later wanted to destroy it, but the idea was editorially vetoed).

But the Miracle Machine would probably have been useless in the Legion's greatest crisis of all--in the story that many fans, including this writer, consider the greatest Legion saga of all. "Mordru the Merciless" (Adventure #369 and #370) was a near-omnipotent sorcerer who had controlled another galaxy for decades (he came from the planet Zerox, which had been established in an old Supergirl story as having been settled in ancient times by sorcerers from Earth--probably one of the most brilliant sequels to a mediocre story in comic book history), and now wanted to extend his rule to Earth. The four Legionnaires in this story didn't even try to fight him--they just fled to the first place they could think of, 20th century Smallville, and Superboy helped the rest establish their own secret identities there. So the entire story was largely devoted to in-depth characterization of the heroes--along with Lana Lang and Pete Ross, who became involved in the plot--in their unusual (for them) setting, and not until they helped the Smallville citizens defeat some gangsters without their powers did they stop to consider the true meaning of courage, and the true duties they had taken upon themselves. Mordru found them before they could return to their own present, though--and, though the ending was somewhat deus ex machina once again, they narrowly defeated him, once again through their own will power and determination than anything else. No summary can do justice to this story--it has to be read to be appreciated, and fortunately it was recently reprinted in an oversize volume that did the superb Curt Swan/Jack Abel artwork, so appropriately capturing the brooding feeling of having the evil mastermind secretly watching from some unknown place, full justice.



After this story, anything would have been anticlimactic--but Shooter did very well nonetheless with the next two issues, in which Colossal Boy was forced through a threat to his parents to aid the villainous Tarik to form a Legion of Super-Villains--the same group that had been introduced years before in Adult Legion stories. (A unique feature of the Legion, especially in the Shooter era, had been the gradual development of events that had already been established in those rare adult adventures--though this too dated back to the days of Edmond Hamilton, who had begun to establish a romance between Lightning Lad and Saturn Girl after it had been revealed they would ultimately marry, Shooter did a lot more in this direction. "The Colossal Failure" not only introduced the younger Super-Villains to the teenage Legion adventures, but added two other members who belonged (or had belonged) to the Adult Legion in Shooter's 1966 story--Timber Wolf (original Lone Wolf, who had first appeared with the teen group in 1964) and Chemical King).

Regrettably, this story was the last to be illustrated by Curt Swan who finally balked at the number of heroes he had to squeeze into every panel. Mort Weisinger was forced to assign the group to the first available artist: J. Winslow Mortimer, who had ghosted many of the Superman and Batman stories of the 1940s, but whose work often seemed too stylistic and out-of-place on the Legion. After a few issues, Jack Abel took over the inks from Mortimer--and his contributions, although they had helped Swan (or at least not hurt him) completely ruined whatever nuances of style Mortimer alone had had.

Shooter's stories were beginning to go downhill, too. Again, this may have been partially because of the art, and he still came up with such near-classics from time to time as "The King of the Legion" (a delightfully-incongruous two-parter involving a contest between the Legionnaires for the most powerful, which Bouncing Boy apparently won), and "Twelve Hours to Live," a moody, almost wistful issue followed by a powerful, action-packed one that together raised some important and telling points about human nature. But by now Jim was suffering through his final years of high school, finding it harder and harder to learn, to write the Legion, and to lead any sort of social life. Mort Weisinger continued to treat him



the same way he had treated his other middle-aged writers, and the relationship was beginning to get strained. Aside from a few stray assignments like a rather mundane Superman/Flash story in which the two learned each other's identities (Superman #220), Jim was now writing the Legion and nothing else.

And even this assignment was cut in half in 1969, when Mort Weisinger, bolstered by Adventure's flagging sales and a still-unkept promise to give Supergirl her own book, decided to turn Adventure over to Supergirl and relegate the Legion to her former 11 pages in the back of Action Comics. Even with that limited space, Shooter did some unusual things--his first story there dealt with drug addiction, even before the famous Spiderman issues that flaunted the Comics Code Authority (which apparently was so used to Weisinger's innocuous fare that it didn't give "The Forbidden Fruit" in Action #378 a second look), and "The Hapless Hero" in Action #381 revealed that Matter-Eater Lad's father was a compulsive gambler and came close to becoming Shooter's second rejected story. By and large, though, the stories--and, even more, the situation--didn't satisfy anyone very much. Shooter wanted to continue working in comics but not for Mort Weisinger (who wanted to retire soon, anyway)--so in late 1969, after he'd failed to get more from Weisinger and graduated from high school, Jim Shooter called the first love of his boyhood--Marvel Comics.

Stan Lee talked to him for about an hour, and finally offered him a job as an editorial assistant even though he'd never heard of Shooter before. The next two weeks were spent mostly in catching up on the Marvel titles he hadn't read in years, and correcting artwork that came in--but it didn't last long. Although Jim liked the people at Marvel, he found life in New York impossible--and, with one last look at the comic book industry, he left it behind him and returned to Pittsburgh for good.

* * *

Deprived of Jim Shooter and not even having Edmond Hamilton any more, the Legion seemed to have lost its verve. When Mort Weisinger finally did retire



and leave Action to Murray Boltinoff, the new editor decided to replace the Legion with another Superman story. Which probably would have been the end of the group had there not been a movement at the time for single-character titles to have 7-page back-up features---and, absurdly, Boltinoff thought this 25-member group would be a perfect short filler for the Superboy title.

The new stories were written by Cary Bates, another young Weisinger discovery who had taken over the strip after Shooter's departure, and assigned another hugely-inappropriate artist, George Tuska. But, whatever the indignity, the Legion was still alive---and it was during this low point that another 13-year-old boy changed the course of comic book history in 1971.

Mike Flynn had grown up with Shooter's Legion, and like many other readers as yet unfamiliar with fandom had been unable to do anything but wish it could somehow reach its former heights again---until this boy from the Bronx wrote to Superboy and, on a whim, asked those who were interested in forming a Legion Fan Club to write to him. Murray Boltinoff printed his letter in Superboy #182, and it struck a tremendous chord in fandom---laterally hundreds of closet Legion fans, most of whom shared Mike's inexperience with organized fandom, wrote to him, and the Legion Fan Club became a reality.

One of the earliest LFC members was Harry C. Broertjes, an 18-year-old journalism student at the University of Chicago, who had had some contact with fandom. It was he more than anyone else who made the club's new fanzine, called The Legion Outpost after the old Adventure lettercol, a success, and he soon took over the editorship from Mike Flynn. Together, Mike and Harry organized a campaign to get the Legion back into its own book, and Murray Boltinoff was flooded

with LoC's. It never did get its own book, but it received the next best thing---for the mail suggested to Murray a possible way of revitalizing the sagging sales of the Superboy title. The magazine became Superboy and the Legion of Super-Heroes (on the cover, if not in the official indicia) with #197, and the sales did improve---very spectacularly. The Legion Fan Club had made its mark, and Cary Bates named a great Legion fan in one of his stories "Flynt Brojj" in honor of its founders.

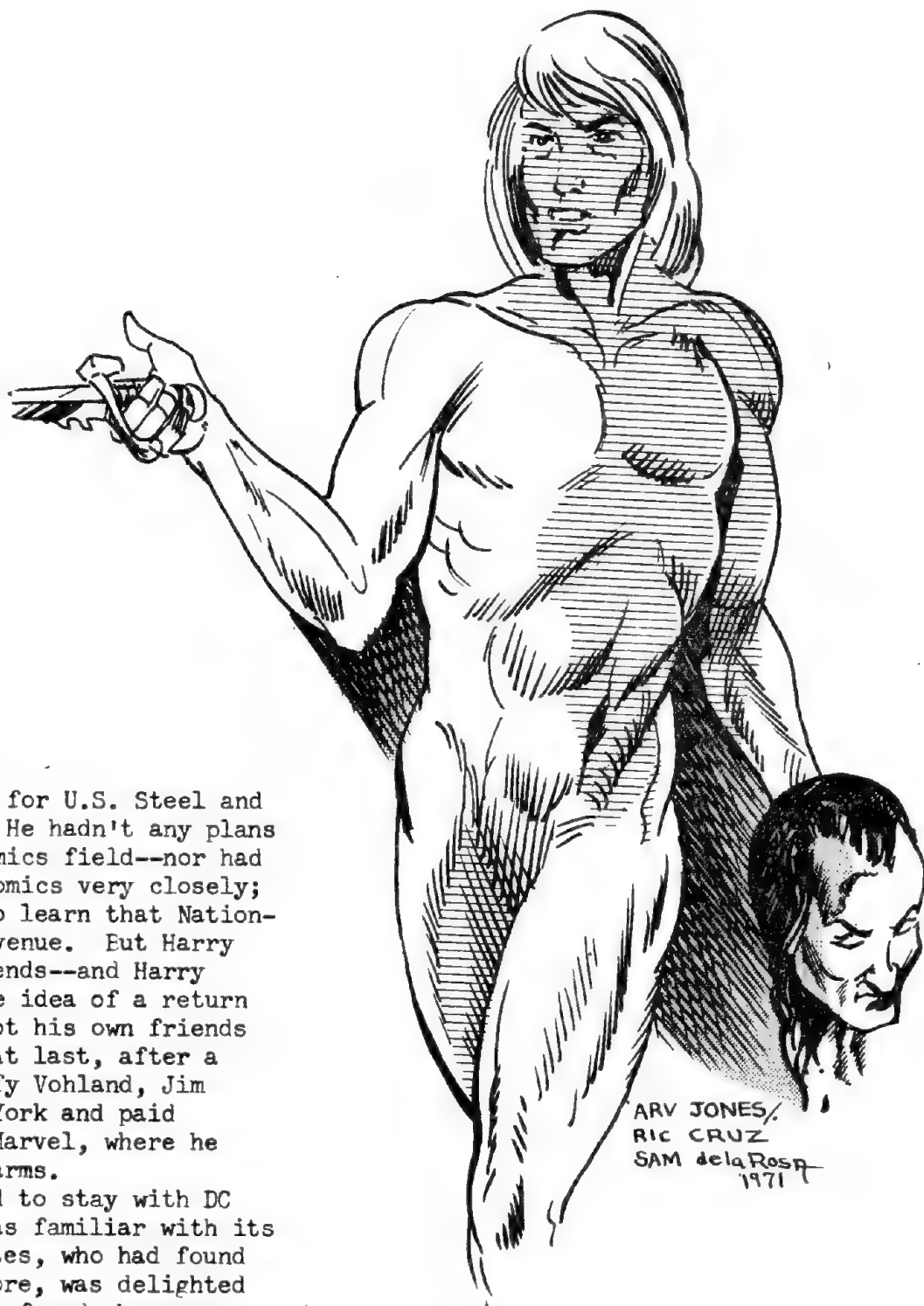
But, although by this time Tuska's art had given way to exquisite renderings by former fan artist Dave Cockrum, Broertjes and the other Outpost contributors---many of whom were to have their work published in other fanzines as well---were far from satisfied on the writing end. As Legion fandom became more and more connected with organized



fandom, they learned that Jim Shooter had had some contact with fandom while he was active in the industry. Ultimately, Harry Broertjes was able to discover his old address from a fan who had once interviewed him--and he discovered that Shooter still lived there!

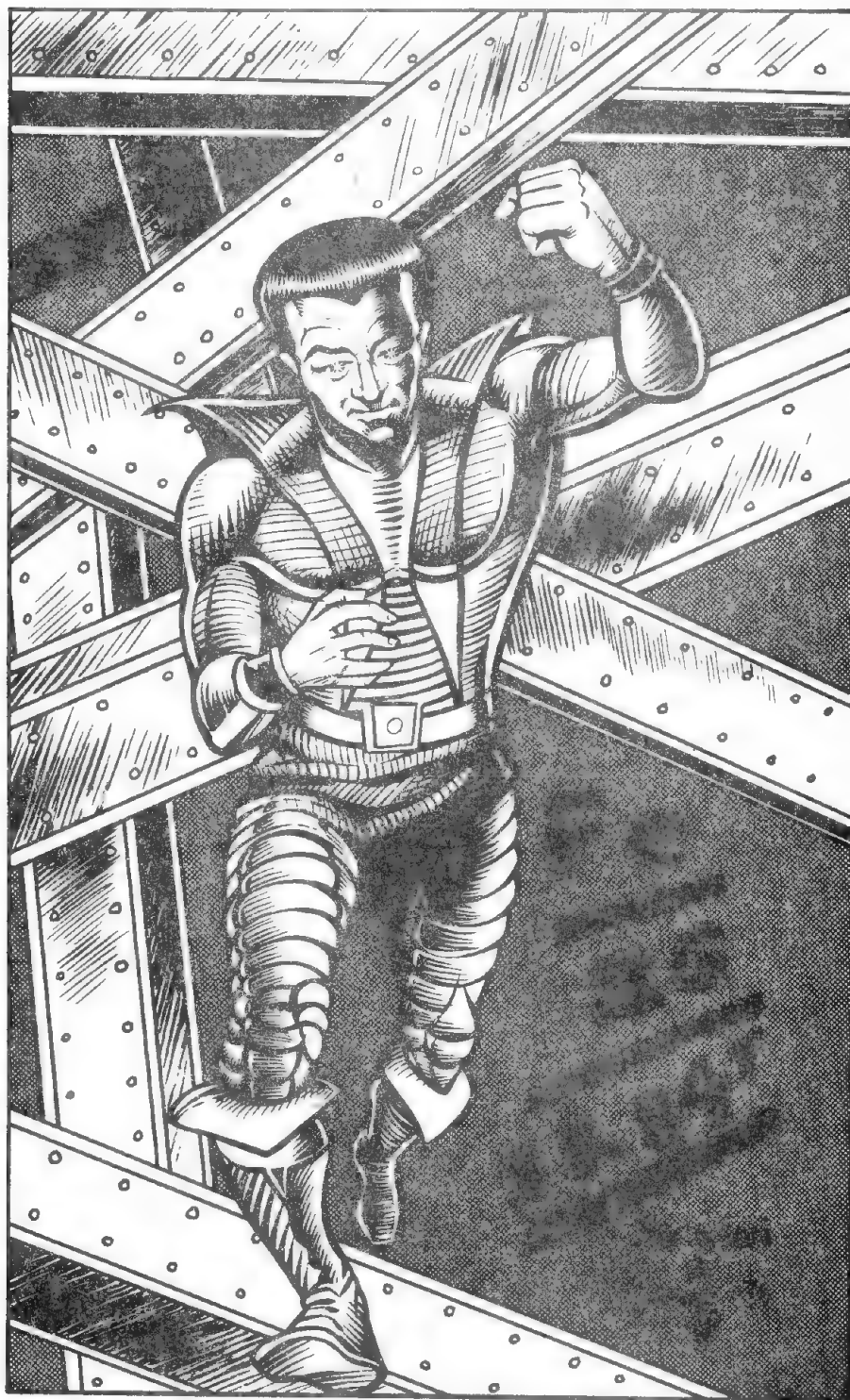
Needless to say, the next Legion Outpost contained a long interview with him. After he had returned to Pittsburgh, Jim had given up a college scholarship and gotten such odd jobs as managing a Kentucky Fried Chicken store, only occasionally returning to comics (in a sense) in the form of advertising handouts for U.S. Steel and other local companies. He hadn't any plans for returning to the comics field--nor had he been following the comics very closely; he was very surprised to learn that National had left 909 Third Avenue. But Harry and Jim became good friends--and Harry never ceased to push the idea of a return to comics to Jim, and got his own friends to help persuade him. At last, after a very long talk with Duffy Vohland, Jim boarded a plane to New York and paid visits to National and Marvel, where he was welcomed with open arms.

Jim Shooter decided to stay with DC for the moment, as he was familiar with its characters--and Cary Bates, who had found writing the Legion a chore, was delighted to give it up. Jim soon found, however, that writing for Murray Boltinoff was much harder than writing for Mort Weisinger had been. Boltinoff insisted on the same type of typed, descriptive scripts that all other National writers used--and was far more demanding when it came to details. Weisinger at least confined his input to the plotting stage and generally allowed Shooter a free hand with the final script--but Murray Boltinoff often found fault with little details (especially the characterization and subplots that had so enlivened his scripts for Weisinger) and insisted that the stories be crammed into as short a space as possible. Nowhere was this more evident than in "Charge of the



ARV JONES/
RIC CRUZ
SAM de la Rosa
1971

Doomed Legionnaires" (Superboy #217) in which a plot Shooter had intended for a booklengther was badly forced into twelve pages, and then cut again to eleven. Too, Dave Cockrum had found the atmosphere oppressive and had moved to Marvel; his replacement, Mike Grell, had superficial polish but too often relied on gimmicks like weird angle shots that were anathema to Shooter's ideas of good storytelling. (He was trying to imitate Neal Adams, but totally lacked Adams' sense of fitting the angle together into a successful layout).



There wasn't much left to Shooter's plots after Boltinoff got through with them--but since he didn't put in the twists that Cary Bates did, he wasn't as successful in Murray's eyes, and the editor continued to get all the stories he could from Cary.

The Superman assignment was even more difficult. Not only did Julie Schwartz adhere to Weisinger's "no permanent changes" policy, but he carried it further--he insisted, at least in Jim's case, that certain supporting characters be used in every story. After only three stories, one an 18-pager that Bob Rozakis badly cut five pages from, Shooter found the Schwartz office too stifling to return to.

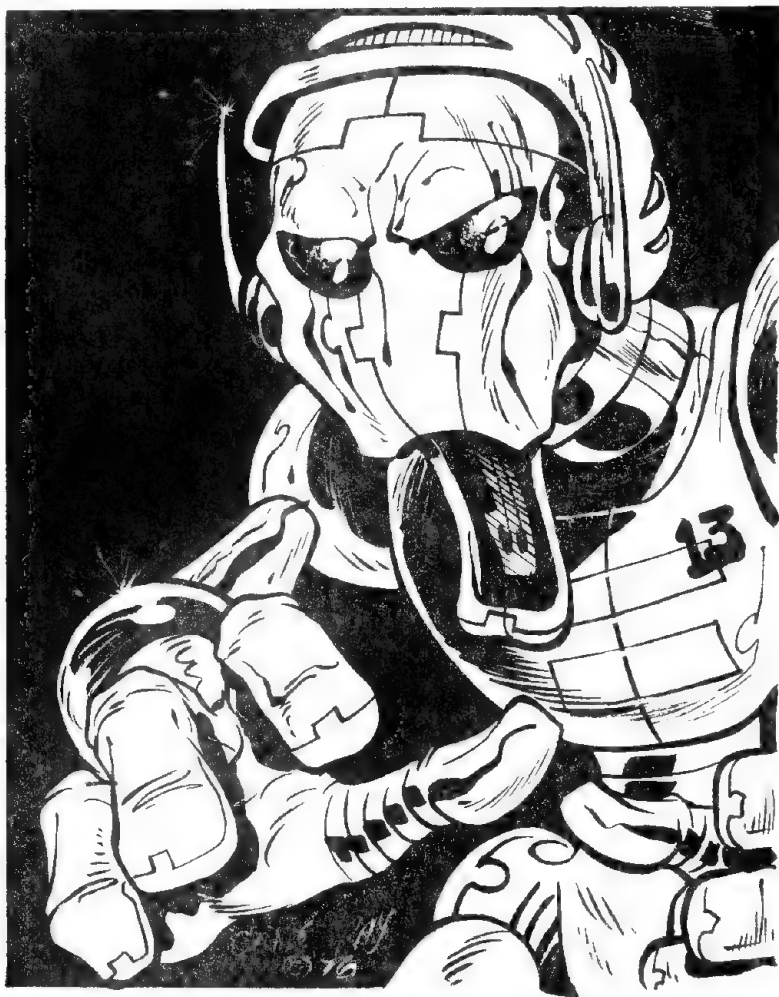
Unable to write Superman and being pushed off the Legion, Jim decided to look elsewhere for further assignments--i.e. Marvel. Unlike the DC editors, who considered him a rank amateur, many of the young Marvel staffers had greatly enjoyed Shooter's Legion work and had offered him more. But at Marvel, Shooter met with more bad luck. He was assigned the Man-Wolf strip, only to have it

cancelled before he'd gotten beyond a plot--and his second assignment, Super-Villain Team-Up, lasted only a single issue before Steve Englehart (who had greater seniority) decided to take it over. And that story, "If Vengeance Fails" (SVTU #3) was even more badly edited than Shooter's new National stories. He had taken up where Tony Isabella had left off, after Betty Dean Prentiss, the Sub-Mariner's ex-girlfriend, had been brutally killed by Dr. Dorcas--and had had Namor charging through his adversaries without saying a word. Some unknown armadillo, though, had taken it upon himself to add dialogue to it, "polish" the rest of the story, and make "corrections" that weren't (at one point, the willains were turned over to Dr. Jennings, who had fled the battle scene), all to the extreme detriment of the story. And yet even that couldn't hide some of the story's originality--for the first time in Marvel history, a character whose system was surging with adrenalin (Namor) lost the fight, and only escaped destruction through the intervention of Dr. Doom. And, at least, the story came to a definite end, and cleared the way for the new plotline that has been running since then...

Nevertheless, neither this story nor his new Legion tales enhanced Shooter's reputation very much, especially among those who were unfamiliar with his earlier stories (few of which had had any credits on them). Some people said he "couldn't write realistic dialogue"--in fact, he was trying to capture the way people really do talk, and in truth there are very few individuals who can think of witty dialogue in the middle of a fight. At last, Jim received the go-ahead from Murray Boltinoff to do some book-length Legion stories (after months of pressure from Harry Broertjes and others), but even they were too often editorially compressed. His recent "We Can't Escape the Trap in Time," which brought back the Time-Trapper, was conceived as a two-parter and crammed into one issue instead. It had some good action, but there was so little room for the plot that it was almost incomprehensible.

And all attempts on Shooter's part to get further work at Marvel proved unsuccessful; there were more staffers than they knew what to do with (especially since the former Atlas staffers needed somewhere to go) which made it almost impossible for a free-lance writer to get anything. But, Marv Wolfman pointed out to Jim, if he were to become a staff member...And Wolfman had been one of the Legion fans of the '60s who knew what Shooter could do, much more than the DC editors did. So in January 1976, Shooter accepted a job with Marvel as an editorial assistant.

He was allowed to continue writing the Legion for a while--but, he was told, they planned to keep him so busy that he wouldn't have time for any such outside assignments. And so, very soon, they did--especially after the staff shakeup of



February and March, 1976. Jim Shooter ended up as second in command in the Marvel hierarchy, after Archie Goodwin--so finally had to leave the Legion. Ironically, Joe Orlando had just taken over the title at the time, and probably would have been far less constricting--but by now Jim was happy in his new position, and had to bid a second farewell to the 30th Century. And yet even in his departure, he left behind a certain influence--for the Legion's new writer (Cary Bates was more than happy to leave it, too), 19-year-old Paul Levitz, had been a great fan of the Shooter Legion and had been inspired to enter the comic book field by Shooter's example.

At this writing, Jim hasn't had much of a chance to prove himself at Marvel. Most of his work there so far has been in the nature of a "Trouble Shooter"--filling in for those who can't meet deadlines. He's done mostly dialogue for other people's plots (an Iron Man over Archie Goodwin's plot, 1/3 of an Avengers over Steve Englehart's plot, a Daredevil over Marv Wolfman's plot), and, even when he's had the chance to do a complete story (which he did with Tigra) it has generally been only a one-shot, where he's had to tie up the previous writer's loose ends and has been left with no room to develop the plotlines and characterizations that are his greatest talent. He's even made his artistic debut, coincidentally, on the first Marvel comic he ever wrote, when Super-Villain Team-Up was strapped for an artist. For this reason, many Marvel fans don't have a very high opinion of him, especially since much of his work has been

in the background.

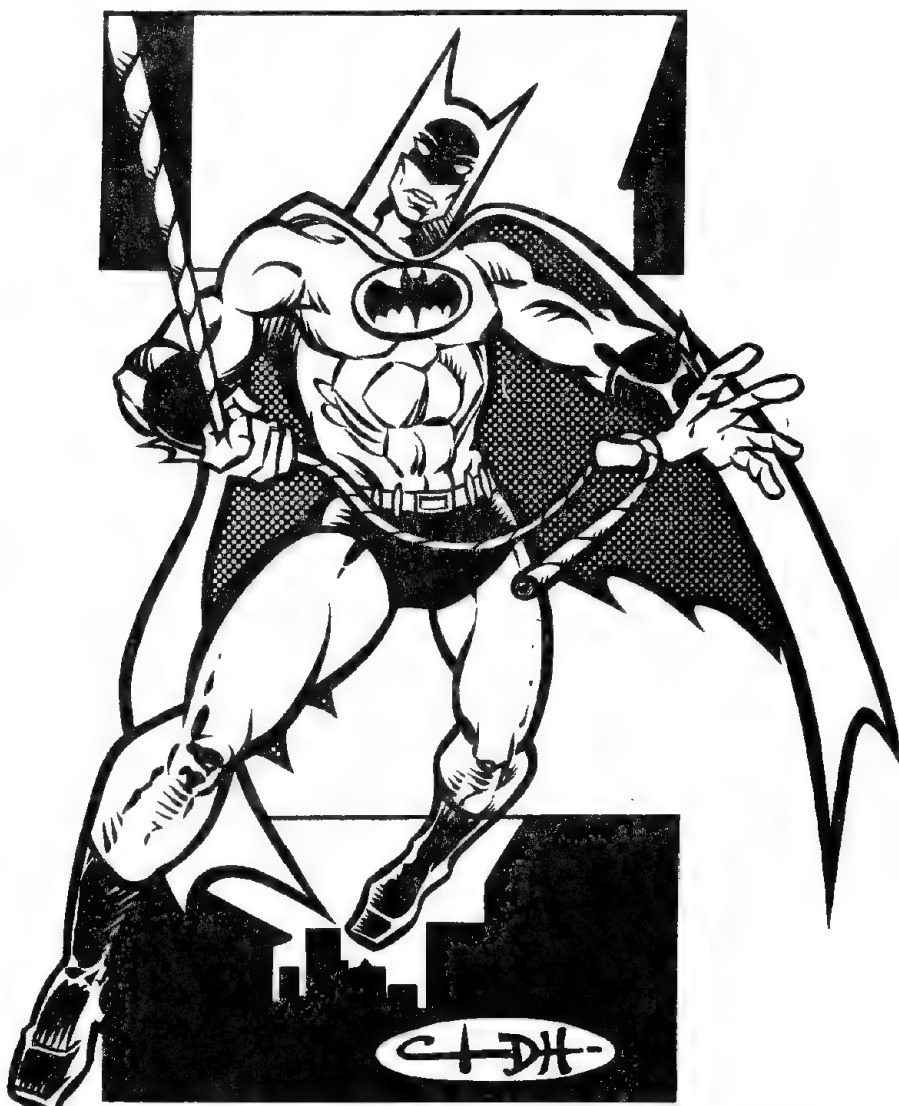
But the Marvel office does understand his abilities--and soon, he'll once again have the opportunity to prove them to fandom at large. Now that Steve Englehart and Gerry Conway have left Marvel, he is finally taking over as regular writer on some of Marvel's top titles--including their foremost superhero group, The Avengers. With a good artist and nonconstrictive editing, I have no doubt that Jim Shooter will prove to the Marvel fans of the '70s that he is a good writer, with certain abilities that few others possess--something the National fans of the '60s have known for years.



THE UFO

CHECKLIST

THE UNITED FANZINE ORGANIZATION, THE UFO, is a co-op of fanzine editors who have gotten together to mutually aid each other in the production and advertisement of their zines and to promote higher quality. The members trade zines with each other and receive free advertising via the UFO CHECKLIST, which appears in each member-zine. The UFO polices its own ranks, and should a member-zine fall below the level of quality each member is required to maintain, it is quickly expelled. Faneds interested in joining the group should contact Kurt Erichsen.



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BATMANIA #22 -- Batmania is the fanzine for Batman fans and is one of the oldest comics fanzines still being published. Today the editor is Rich Morrissey, who with this issue is a member of the UFO. This issue (Rich's fifth) features "Panic in the Night", Batfiction by Chris Lowder with illustrations by Arlen Schumer, a section of comic oddities ("In the early issues of the Fantastic Four...they lived in Central City, not New York! I wonder what the Flash--not to mention the Spirit--would have to say about that?"). Also included are Jay Zilber's "Update", here taking a look at the Joker and other Batman related books, part two of the Batman Checklist, and more. Other artwork is by Al Bradford, Mercy Van Vlack, Esquebedo Demerary, and others. \$1.00, 24 pages, offset, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x11, reduced type. Order from Richard H. Morrissey.

BULLDOG #9 -- Bulldog is a stripzine, but not the kind you usually think of, it doesn't feature fan comic strips, but rather, it's a newspaper-strip zine with articles about comic strips, such as Russ Manning's first TARZAN story, strips #8857-8880, an article by Dennis Wilcutt; news about new newspaper strips and interesting bits about existing strips and their creators; a question corner, Bob Bindig's look at Prince Valiant #24-39, and more. And of course, in addition to this, there is the letter section. But that's only half of it: BULLDOG also doubles as an adzine for strip-related material, making it the most complete newspaper stripzine around. This issue's cover is by Don Herron; the issue is 30 pages with the article section being offset and the ads mostly mimeo. 50¢ from Steve Kristiansen.

COMIX UNLIMITED #2 -- CU is a stripzine with an underground accent, featuring Gilbert Shelton's and Dave Sheridan's FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROTHERS, and Jay Lynch's SNARFO...and Fat Freddy's Cat, too! There are some good fan strips, too, including the work of George Erling (who also did the cover) and Brian Buniak, (who did the back cover--which casts the Mary Tyler Moore crew in The Wizard of Oz!). And rounding out the issue are a few ads, and letters. Offset throughout, 30 pages, 8½x5½. 45¢ from Vincent Kimszal.

ENDEAVOR #10 -- Ron Harris, Paul Chadwick, Bill Morse, and Neil Riehle are featured on this issue's covers. Endeavor is a fiction/strip/artzine, this issue featuring Wayne Gerard Carey's novella, "Black Future", and Kurt Erichsen's "Little Fantasies", which is about a fan who gets an interesting offer: mint EC's for 10¢ each! Also included with this issue is the UFO Awards strip, which hands out the awards for the best UFO fanzines of 1975 to UFO fanzine editors and their contributors--who appear in funny animal guise! Other strips include Dave McDonnell's STRANGE BUT UNNATURAL PRACTICES and A MATTER OF ART by Kurt Erichsen with Tim Lynch, that announces an exciting new artistic approach to dentistry! Additional artwork by John Onoda, Cliff Kurowski, Angus MacLeod, and Rod Snyder. 104 (!) pages, offset, mimeo, and ditto. \$1.40 from Kurt Erichsen.

FREE FALL #8 -- This is Mike Main's comics genzine, profusely illustrated with lots of artwork and cartoons by Paul Chadwick. It features a unique story called "Up Above the World So High", which talks about SF and history as well as giving the adventures of two boys who may make ballooning history still. Other features include "Handle With Care", Paul Chadwick's tale of rage and frustration and trying to buy underground comics at a con when you're 17 years old, but only ending up with a shirtful of orange sord instead; Mike Main gets his feet wet in SF books, and an appearance by the Armchair Philosopher. And finally, Ron Harris looks at the Dell comic BRAIN BOY. Mike Main is the editor but he's partying in Scotland. Ditto with offset covers. 28 pages for 50¢. Order from Paul Eisenbrey, 925 Orton Hall, Pullman, Wa. 99163.

FANDOM FUNNIES #3: THE BUYER'S GOD -- Fandom Funnies is a parody zine, which each issue parodies some other well-known comics publication. The Buyer's God parodies a typical issue of The Buyer's Guide, with its regular features, "Lead Balloons," by Don and Maggie (Sherman, Zilber, and Caldwell), "So What?" by Murray Blastoff (Harry C. Broertjes), in which Murray Blastoff tells of calling Marvel to get news items for his column (Marvel is buying out National Lampoon and is starting a Kojack comic which will have a Howard the Duck crossover. Plus, there's a cartoon contest, won by little Janie Hamilton of Scottsdale, Arizona; honorable mention went to Vaughn Bode and Wallace Wood. And there are advertisements, which have to be seen to be believed! The artwork includes

covers by Alan Hutchinson, Ron Harris, and Kurt Erichsen as well as work by Bill Sherman, Rich Bruning, Jim MacPherson, Al Williamson (swiped by Martin Grime), Ken Barr (swiped by Martin Grime), and Frank Robbins (swiped by Martin Grime). The Buyer's God is easily the funniest zine of the year--a must if you like to laugh! Tabloid, 11x17, offset; 28 pages on newsprint for \$1.00 from Jay Zilber.

OZARK FANDOM #8 -- With its eighth issue, OZARK FANDOM prints a special three page "pulp" story, plus an installment of Lester Boutillier's ALIENATING CRITIC, the regular letters column, zine reviews and other features. 8 pages (4 offset, 4 mimeo), 8½x14. 25¢ or two 13¢ stamps; Order from Chris Rock.

RADION #4 -- The DC Reader changes its name and joins the UFO! This first issue under the new format features covers by Bill Black, Dennis Fujitake, Kupperburg/Hazlewood, and Nick Cuti. On the inside are a series of interviews. The first is "Nick Who?", a talk with Nick Cuti about E-Man, things at Charlton, and how to sell a script to a comic book company. The second is a talk with Michael Juliar, Sanho Kim's assistant, about Sanho Kim and his approach to comics, accompanied by illoes from Sword's Edge, an illustrated novel by Kim/Juliar about Korea in the final century of the Koryo Dynasty. The third interview is with James Childress, writer and artist of Conchy. He talks about syndication of his strip by himself before Publishers Hall picked up the rights. Also in this issue are Rod Snyder on "Egoboo and the Common Faned", editorial, letters, and illoes by Russell Myers, Stan Sakai, Mike Sekowsky, Sal Trapani, Doug Hazlewood, and others. Offset, 8½x11, 28 pages, for 65¢. Order from Tom Mason.

TALES OF THE DUPLICATOR #3 -- For those who haven't heard the term before, Faan Fiction is a special genre of amateur fiction: specifically, it's stories about fans, written by fans. TOTD is a faan fiction zine; there have never been many faan fiction zines around, but TOTD is one of the most frequently published today. The stories here often have a satirical as well as faanish slant. In this issue the featured story is a Blue Fan tale by Greg Swan called "Insurrectionists of Manara", illustrated by Jim Pascoe. Additional features include "Crudscene" by Wally Short and his friends, an all-too-familiar-sounding (not to mention funny) crudzine parody, and another story by Greg Swan, "A Lesson in Morality", with illoes by Mike Kuypers. Plus there are the usual letters and Indulgetorial sections, and covers by Jim Pascoe and Kinsey Caruth. 42 pages, 8½x11, ditto. 45¢ from Greg Swan.

JUST RELEASED

ENTROPY COSMIX #2 -- This special weird issue of Bill Mutschler's stripzine. Three strips make up the bulk of this issue. The first is "Ellery Jack", a whodunit by Bill Neville which parodies none other than Ellery Queen. The second is a western strip called "The Horns of Sand" by Steve Clement, Bill Neville, Sam De La Rosa, and R. Burchette. The last strip is a super-hero one by Samuel Maronie, Neville, and Burchette entitled "Helios, Inc". An editorial, lettercol, and short story round out the issue. Covers are by Dave Mowry, Neville/De La Rosa, and John Byrne/Alan Limacher. Other artwork in the issue is by Tim Herzog, Ed Margulies, Rick McCollum, Ken Meyer, Jr., Bill Mutschler, Rod Snyder, and others. Offset, 8½x5½, 40 pages with a 4-page Bugproof Mailing Cover. 75¢ from Bill Mutschler.

STILL AVAILABLE:

BATMANIA #19, 20: \$1.00 ea. from Rich Morrissey
BULLDOG #7,8: 75¢ each from Steve Kristiansen
COMIX UNLIMITED #1: 60¢ from Vince Kimszal
ENDEAVOR #7,8,9: \$1.50, 50¢, \$1 respectively from K. Erichsen
FANDOM FUNNIES #2: \$1.00 from Jay Zilber
FANGS #1: free for #10 SASE from Mike Canuel
FREE FALL #1,4,6,7: 50¢ each from Paul Eisenbrey
FURION #1,2,3: 35¢ each from Steve Kristiansen
GRAPHEX #2,3: 80¢ ea. from Bill Mutschler
OZARK FANDOM #3,5,7: 25¢ (or two-13¢ stamps) from Chris Rock
TALES OF THE DUPLICATOR #1,2: 35¢ each from Greg Swan
TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS (the official UFO Newsletter) #2-8,14-16,18,19,23-25,27.
50¢ each or 4/\$1.35 from Kurt Erichsen

THE UFO ROSTER:

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Don Fortier/Box 209/Kenner, La. 70063
Stever Keeter/110 W. Eden St./Edenton, NC 27932
Vincent Kimszal/1400 S. Stiles St./Linden, NJ 07036
Steve Kristiansen/Box 368/Lynnwood, Wa. 98036
Mike Main--c/ Paul Eisenbrey/925 Orton Hall/Pullman, Wa. 99163
Tom Mason/705 Draper Road/Blacksburg, VA 24060
Richard H. Morrissey/55 Claudette Circle/Framingham, Mass. 01701
Bill Mutschler/500 Crestview Road/Wayne, Pa. 19087
Chris Rock/Rt. 2, Box 265/Mountain Grove, Mo. 65711
Greg Swan/555 N. Miller/Mesa, Arizona 85203
Terry Vedas/1536 Clavelite Place/San Diego, CA 92154
Jay Zilber/Oberlin College Mail Room, Box 2863/Oberlin, Ohio 44074







D. HERRING
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